Community Falls Prevention Program Sustainability Guidelines

Training program to support use of the Guidelines

Developed in Component 4 of an NHMRC Partnership Grant: ‘Reducing falls among older people in Victoria: Better evidence, better targeting, better outcomes’

Funded by NHMRC and the Victorian Government Department of Health
Outline of this training program

- Overview of the NHMRC Partnership grant that this project is part of
- Method used to develop the guidelines
- Definitions of program sustainability
- Why program sustainability is important
- 12 key factors for program sustainability
- Using the guideline documentation
NHMRC Grant Partnership project: overview
Purpose

• To inform the Victorian Government Department of Health in terms of:
  – priorities
  – best value funding options, and
  – future directions for policy and planning

TO REDUCE FALLS AND FALL INJURIES AMONG OLDER VICTORIANS
NHMRC Grant Partners

- Monash University
- La Trobe University
- The University of Sydney
- National Ageing Research Institute
- Victorian Department of Health
- The University of Melbourne
- University of Western Australia
NHMRC Partnership Grant Project Components

1. Identify priority groups through hospital admission data to improve the targeting of falls prevention interventions.
2. Identify the acceptability of falls interventions to older people and the barriers and facilitators for individual action.
3. Identify opportunities to integrate evidence based falls prevention interventions into government departmental policies and programs.
4. Develop community falls prevention program sustainability guidelines and training program
Component 4: Developing Community Falls Prevention Program Sustainability Guidelines and training program
Component 4 project team

- National Ageing Research Institute
- La Trobe University
- The University of Sydney
- The University of Melbourne
Aim

Develop program sustainability guidelines and an accompanying training program to:

• facilitate the incorporation of falls prevention activities into agency work
• maximise the likelihood of longer term sustainability of effective (critical) components of programs
• assist agencies plan sustainability from the outset
Method

- Conduct a literature review
- Develop draft guidelines/training program
- Trial draft guidelines/training program
- Conduct focus groups or individual interviews with trial participants
- Refine the guidelines/training program
Program
Sustainability
Why sustainability is important?

- Falls are a significant problem for older people and continue to be

- A moderate proportion of programs do not achieve long term sustainability

- You/your organisation will/have invested time and money

- Programs inappropriately terminated may find stakeholder engagement in future endeavours more difficult
Sustainability: what do we mean?

- The continuation of effective programs or the effective components of program
- Where the activities aimed at achieving the program’s objectives are incorporated into the organisation’s routines

(Pluye et al, 2004; Shediac-Rizkallah and Bone, 1998)
Literature review

- Variations in the definitions of sustainability
- Falls prevention:
  - little information specifically looking at program sustainability in the community
  - Falls prevention guidelines have brief, if any reference, to sustainability
  - In all, there were 10 articles/reports
- Factors identified in the falls prevention literature mirrors the general health (injury prevention/health promotion) sustainability literature
The Guidelines documentation

• The guidelines and workbook includes:
  – Comments page after each sub-section
  – Sustainability plan summary of the actions in each sub-section
  – Sustainability checklist
  – Action and Options Plan
  – Program components to be sustained sheet
  – Sustainability Status Checklist
• The supporting document
Barriers and facilitators to sustainability

- What barriers have you encountered or do you expect to encounter?
- How have you/how do you intend to address them?
- What are your program’s strengths?
- What are some of the strategies you have used, or intend to use, to keep your program on track and your stakeholders engaged?
12 factors associated with program sustainability
1. Establishing a need for the program
   - Defining the problem or demand
   - How addressing it benefits your organisation and/or clientele
Sustainability factors

2. Core business / fit with organisation
   - Match in values, goals and core business
   - Area of interest (priority)
3. Benefits

- Potential benefits based on empirical evidence
- Actual benefits – substantiated by your evaluation
- Benefits disseminated frequently
- Detailed marketing plan
Sustainability factors

4. Organisational capacity

– Have the knowledge, skills and resources to conduct the program

– Form partnerships to build capacity

– Commitment
Sustainability factors

5. Planning from the outset: implementation, evaluation and sustainability

- Clear and detailed implementation plan
- Evaluation plan: process, impact, outcome measures
- Sustainability plan: what will be sustained and how, how it will be measured
- Reviewing plans
Sustainability factors

6. Program adaptability

- Adapting it to local context (making delivery easier, more relevant)
- Maintaining the essential elements that make it effective (program fidelity)
Sustainability factors

7. Integrating into existing routines
   - Integrating into existing programs, processes and roles
   - Amending policies, manuals and position descriptions
Example

Falls prevention officer role was incorporated into the existing clinical risk manager’s role (NARI, 2003).
An audit of inpatient falls identified high risk wards, and the activities and patient profiles commonly associated with falls in the hospital.
The multidisciplinary falls prevention committee modified the STRATIFY and integrated falls risk screening and simple interventions into existing daily care plan documentation.
Systems were also implemented to monitor compliance.
The falls risk screening and strategies are being sustained by being integrated into existing routines and practices.
There was a substantial and sustained (three years after implementation) reduction in fall related injuries. (Barker et al., 2009)
8. Partnerships

- Build capacity – knowledge, resources, funding
- A memorandum of agreed goals and actions – roles, responsibilities and contributions
- Broader networks
9. Stakeholder engagement – staff, management, partners, older people

- Awareness raising and education – impact of falls and the benefits of falls prevention interventions
- Committee/working group involvement; input into program design and implementation
- Identify and address resistance, concerns early
Sustainability factors

10. Capacity building – staff/partners

– Training – initial and ongoing
– For staff, partners and program champions
Sustainability factors

11. Funding and resources

- Resources and costing – realistic
- Source funding (financial and in-kind) – short term and long term
- Review and source – similar to other programs in the organisation
Sustainability factors

12. Program champions
   - Consider more than one champion
   - Internal and external champions
   - Drivers and advocates
   - Define role/s
   - Identify and provide adequate training and support
   - Include strategies for continuity (holidays, change of employment ... )
   - Choose the right program champions
Program champions

- Respected; credible
- Well placed in organisation
- Appropriate skills and knowledge
- Motivated and motivate others
- Anticipate and address problems early
- Understand the organisation’s culture
- Preferably permanent staff members
Using the guidelines (1)

Key person/s responsible for the guideline documentation will:

• Finalise the statements detailing how each factor is being/will be addressed.

• Work through the Sustainability Checklist
  – Respond to each question with a ‘yes’ (if the item has been addressed) or ‘no’ (if the item has not been addressed or is not adequately addressed)
  – Prioritise the items requiring action as low, medium or high priority

• Provide this documentation to relevant stakeholders for feedback/sign off
Using the guidelines (2)

• In the Action and Options Plan document the actions you will undertake to address the high priority items, including:
  – By whom and when (timelines)
  – Diary actions for follow up

• In the Program components to be Sustained sheet, document:
  – The program components to be sustained
  – How they will be sustained
  – How sustainability will be measured
Also included in the guidelines:

- An example of an implementation and sustainability GANTT chart

- A Sustainability Status checklist - to help you determine the overall level of sustainability achieved by your program
  - At a given time
  - To compare your sustainability at different times points
Remember

All action should be reviewed, updated and signed off on a regular basis

~

Plan, engage, implement, evaluate, adapt, evaluate/monitor

Sustainability is achievable
Guidelines available from:

Monash website: www.monash.edu/miri

Links from:

Department of Health website:

National Ageing Research Institute:
www.mednwh.unimelb.edu.au/research/research_falls_resources.htm